

Message Text

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ORIGIN ACDA-12

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AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE RUDORRA
USCINCEUR

S E C R E T STATE 083039

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PARM, NATO, MBFR

SUBJECT:MBFR: NEXT STEPS ON THE NATO INITIATIVE

REF: BONN 5113 (DTG 211736Z MAR 78)

1. WE HAVE CONSIDERED THE QUESTION OF NEXT STEPS IN
PRESENTING THE NATO MBFR INITIATIVE TO THE EAST IN VIENNA.

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NOW THAT DISAGGREGATED GROUND FORCE MANPOWER DATA HAS BEEN
EXCHANGED, AND ASSUMING THAT AIR FORCE MANPOWER DATA WILL BE
EXCHANGED ON APRIL 4 AS NOW PLANNED, WE BELIEVE THE ALLIES
SHOULD CAPITALIZE ON THE MOMENTUM PROVIDED BY THE SUCCESS-
FUL DATA EXCHANGE AND PROCEED WITH THE NATO INITIATIVE.

2. WE SEE CLEAR ADVANTAGES IN TABLING THE INITIATIVE BEFORE

THE END OF THIS ROUND FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. TABLING THE INITIATIVE MAY SPUR THE EAST TOWARD A MORE FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE IN THE DATA DISCUSSION WHICH IS ALREADY UNDERWAY IN VIENNA.

B. BECAUSE THE EXISTENCE OF THE INITIATIVE IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, THE EAST IS UNLIKELY TO MOVE ON SUBSTANCE IN VIENNA UNTIL THE INITIATIVE IS PRESENTED. THE EAST HAS SIGNALLED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN VIENNA THAT IT IS AWAITING

THE NEW WESTERN PROPOSALS AND THAT THE PROPOSALS MAY CONTAIN ASPECTS OF INTEREST THAT COULD BE BUILT UPON.

C. TABLING THE INITIATIVE DURING THE WEEK OF APRIL 10-14 WOULD GIVE THE EAST TIME TO ASK CLARIFYING QUESTIONS, AND RECEIVE WESTERN RESPONSES BEFORE THE END OF THE ROUND. THIS APPROACH WOULD PERMIT THE SOVIET NEGOTIATORS TO WORK ON THEIR RESPONSE WITH THEIR PRINCIPALS IN MOSCOW DURING THE APRIL-MAY RECESS AND THUS GIVE THE WEST THE OPTIMAL CHANCE OF RECEIVING THE BEST POSSIBLE SOVIET RESPONSE.

D. FINALLY, TABLING THE INITIATIVE DURING THIS ROUND WOULD ENABLE THE ALLIANCE TO ENTER BOTH THE SSOD AND THE NATO SUMMIT IN AN IMPROVED POSITION ON AT LEAST ONE MAJOR AREA OF ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. THE INITIATIVE COULD THEN BE
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GIVEN FURTHER PUBLIC EMPHASIS AT THE SUMMIT.

3. WE WOULD WELCOME ALLIED VIEWS ON TIMING FOR THE TABLING OF THE INITIATIVE AND ON THE QUESTION OF HOW THE WEST CAN GAIN THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM THE INITIATIVE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NATO SUMMIT AND THE SSOD, AND ON TIMING MOST LIKELY TO EVOKE A POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM THE EAST.

4. TO PREPARE THE INITIATIVE FOR TABLING DURING THE WEEK OF APRIL 10-14, IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE NAC SHOULD REACH AN EARLY DECISION ON THE TEXT OF GUIDANCE TO THE AHG FOR TABLING THE INITIATIVE.

5. WITH THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND, AMBASSADOR SHOULD CONSULT WITH UK AND FRG PERMREPS AT NATO, DESCRIBE OUR VIEWS AS SET FORTH IN PARAS 1-4 ABOVE, AND STATE THAT UNLESS LONDON OR BONN HAS OBJECTION, WE WILL TAKE THIS LINE IN NATO. US, FRG, AND UK PERMREPS SHOULD WORK OUT ARRANGEMENTS FOR EARLY NAC ACTION, NEXT WEEK IF POSSIBLE.

6. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NATO BE UNITED ON THIS MATTER. WE ARE WILLING TO DEFER TABLING OF INITIATIVE IF THAT IS

THE CONSENSUS OF THE ALLIES. COOPER

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